

INTERDEPT COMMITTEE
MINUTES
ACQUISITIONS
CONFIDENTIAL

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INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR THE ACQUISITION OF FOREIGN PUBLICATIONS

Meeting of May 7, 1943

M I N U T E S

PRESENT:

Department of Agriculture
Office of War Information
Library of Congress
Department of Treasury
Office of the Coordinator
of Inter-American Affairs
War Department
Department of Commerce
State Department
Board of Economic Warfare
Executive Secretary
Assistant to Mr. Kilgour

Mr. Shaw
Mr. Krould
Mr. Moriarty
Mr. Southworth
Mr. Worth
Mr. Dudley
Mr. Hale
Mr. Domeratsky
Mr. Spaulding
Mr. Chaput
Mr. Kilgour
Mr. Clift

Mr. Kilgour presided.

The minutes of the meeting of April 23 were read and approved.

The chair read a letter from Mr. Howland H. Sargeant of the Office of the Alien Property Custodian which stated that Mr. Eugene B. Power of Microfilms, Inc. had requested the APC for permission to make microfilm copies of periodicals which the APC is reproducing by arrangement with the Interdepartmental Committee. Mr. Sargeant went on to state that the APC would be pleased to act in accordance with the Committee's instructions. A discussion followed during which the chair read the following translations of two excerpts from German newspapers.

Der Angriff, March 26, 1943:

"About 400 technical books by Axis authors have been put at the disposal of American publishers for reprinting and this includes books on aviation, medicine and oceanography, physics, and chemistry. This procedure shows that the Americans are obviously dependent on intellectual thievery."

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Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung, February 4, 1943:

"The Americans, who as it is well known have undertaken to exterminate the German barbarism and to civilize once and for all the German barbarians, are busily engaged in looking for material for this pioneering effort, and they have found very useful material indeed already. 400 books of a high standard - books which represent the explorer's aptitude and diligence. These books will help the progress of culture and civilization appreciably. Thus, Washington is determined to ask American publishers to publish these books or reprint them. A look at the list of authors shows names which sound very German. It is the intellectual property of the Axis powers which has been stolen without much fuss. Predominantly, it concerns books of medicine, aviation, and chemical and physical subjects of German scientists which are now appropriated in connection with the confiscation of enemy property because USA scientists have nothing of equal value. America robs Germany's intellectual property and claims at the same time to be entitled to exterminate the German spirit and to correct it. In the view of the American war psychosis, it cannot in the least be expected that the American people should be surprised at this mass robbery when Washington pounds into their ears phrases of the intellectual and civilizing American war policy."

At the end of the discussion, the Committee agreed that as far as it is concerned the APC could grant to Mr. Power the permission which he requested.

The chair reported that the Army-Navy Journal had requested permission to make and publish abstracts of articles appearing in current foreign military magazines. After a discussion of this request, the Committee asked Major Hale to determine and to report the Army's attitude toward this request.

Dr. Domeratsky inquired about progress toward the publication of a new Alphabetical List. Mr. Clift reported that the records had recently been brought up to date and that arrangements were being made to obtain, from the OSS pool, a typist to stencil the records. Dr. Domeratsky very kindly offered to lend the Committee a typist for one or two weeks, and the offer was immediately accepted with gratitude by the chair.

Dr. Domeratsky also registered a complaint about the fabricated spools on which the microfilm is now being distributed.

Major Hale inquired about the possibility of obtaining Krasnaia Zvezda more rapidly than at the present time. The chair reported that the microfilm camera for Moscow was somewhere between Muimansk and Moscow and that the State Department had been asked to arrange with the Russians for the air transport of original Russian publications from Moscow to Fairbanks at which point the Air Transport Command would take them over and fly them to Washington. Dr. Spaulding said that he would telegraph Moscow to determine how these projects are progressing.

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-3-

Mr. Moriarty reported that the Library of Congress had been approached with the suggestion that it arrange with the Presidents of the American Colleges at Istanbul, Beirut, and Cairo for them to collect for and ship to the Library publications appearing in these areas. The Committee was of the opinion that this type of collection would in no way be a duplication of the Committee's work and encouraged Mr. Moriarty to proceed with such arrangements.

The chair next brought up the problem of circulating originals and full-size photographic reproductions and referred to the report requested of him at the last meeting which had been prepared and sent to each Committee member on April 30. After discussing this problem the Committee decided that a few of the papers should be photostated for circulation and that the use of the remaining air space allotted to the Committee should be determined by the requests of BEW, ONI, OSS, OWI, and MIS. The following list of publications to be photostated was drawn up: Koelnische Zeitung, Voelkischer Beobachter, Frankfurter Zeitung, Deutsche Volkswirt, Neue Tag, Neuo Zuercher Zeitung (Morgen Ausgabe) Fester Lloyd, Il Sole, La Stampa, Les Nouveaux Temps, and Neue Ordnung.

The determination of a policy concerning deferments for the Committee's representatives in the field was discussed. Mr. Shaw moved that no person eligible for the draft would be sent abroad by the Committee. Mr. Moriarty seconded the motion. The question was put to vote and unanimously approved. Mr. Shaw then moved that the Committee ask for no deferments for anybody. Mr. Moriarty seconded the motion. The question was put to vote and all members voted "yes" except the representative from BEW who voted "no."